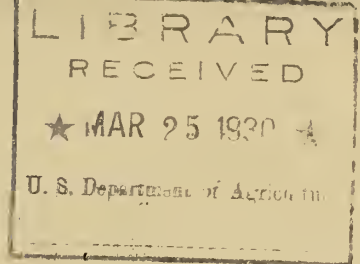


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"LAMB AS YOU LIKE IT" -- AN INTERVIEW

A radio interview by Miss Van Deman and Miss Lucy Alexander, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through Station WRC and 32 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, March 7, 1930.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

"Lamb as you like it" has a familiar ring, we are aware. For many of you already associate it with the Government leaflet on lamb cooking. We choose it, though, as the title of this talk because it seems to express, better than any other phrase we could think of, the reaction of the American public today to lamb. With our national lamb appetite growing apace, it is good news that this spring will bring more and better lamb onto the market than ever before. Another piece of good news is that retail butchers have learned some smart new tricks in cutting lamb. You have perhaps seen and sampled some of these ~~new-fashioned~~ boned chops and shoulders.

The letters that came pouring in after our talk in January, on cooking meat according to the cut, convinced us more than ever how much interest there is in the application of science to meat cooking. Since then Miss Alexander has roasted still another hundred legs of lamb. This brings her grand total up to 1700. It sounds more than ever, doesn't it, as though she were out to establish a world record as a meat cook? There is a scientific reason, though, behind the roasting of every one of these legs of lamb in the Bureau of Home Economics, as we explained before. Now, I'm going to ask Miss Alexander to forget for a few minutes about roasting lamb for meat judges. Would you tell us, instead, Miss Alexander, just how you would cook a leg of lamb for next Sunday's dinner, let us say, in your own home kitchen?

MISS ALEXANDER:

Roasting is the way of all ways to cook leg of lamb. For lamb is one of the tender meats. Every bit of lamb, from tip to tail, is so tender that it can be either roasted or broiled. Lovers of lamb stew, however, need not be worried, for there are many little tidbits of lamb that are just right for this dish.

As for leg of lamb, select a plump one, cut so as to include some of the loin. Have the butcher leave the fall on. Wipe the leg with a damp cloth, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and rub with flour. Then lay the leg on a rack in an open roasting pan and do not add water. We recommend, by the way, a rack in roasting all kinds of meat. The rack holds the meat away with the bother of turning the roast, and keeps the meat from cooking too fast on the bottom. Put the lamb leg into a hot oven and sear for about 30 minutes. Then reduce the oven to very moderate heat, and continue to roast, allowing about 30 minutes to the pound, including the searing time. A well-fatted lamb leg roasted in this way will need no basting.

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When selecting a leg of lamb, or any other roast, suit the size to your family, but remember that left-over lamb is a fine thing to have in the larder. Roast lamb is one of the best meats for slicing cold and every scrap can be used in any one of a dozen hot appetizing dishes.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

You mentioned fell, Miss Alexander. Just what is the fell on lamb and why did you say to leave it on the leg?

MISS ALEXANDER:

The fell is the thin, papery outer covering on a lamb carcass. We always leave the fell on the leg because it roasts more quickly with the fall undisturbed. The meat also shrinks less, and is juicier. Though you sometimes hear that the fell has strong flavor, we have not found this true. For the sake of looks, however, we prefer the fell removed from lamb shoulder, saddle, and chops.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Glad you mentioned chops, Miss Alexander. Lamb is cut into so many kinds of chops that one hardly knows which to choose. For instance, there are loin chops, rib chops, shoulder chops, Saratoga chops, single chops, double chops, boned chops, French chops, English chops. Tell us, do you cook them all alike?

MISS ALEXANDER:

Quite right, Miss Van Deman. There certainly is variety in lamb chops. But they are all tender meat, and no matter what plain or fancy name they go by, all lamb chops should be broiled. Broiling by direct heat under a gas flame, or over a bed of hot coals, or in an electric grill, is one way. Pan-broiling in a heavy skillet is the other. Chops can be broiled to a turn either way, if the temperature is regulated.

That is one trick in cooking chops. Another is, never cover lamb chops as they are broiling, and never add water. Also there is no question that it is easier to broil a thick chop and keep it juicy than it is a thin one.

First sear lamb chops quickly, then lower the temperature and finish at moderate heat. In broiling thick chops, a very good way is to finish them in the oven. Brown them first in the skillet, then slip a rack under them and set them, skillet and all, in a moderate oven. You can give them attention to the rest of the dinner, with no fear of overcooking the chops.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

There's a lot more, I know, that you could tell, Miss Alexander, about chops. In fact, there are people who seem to believe that all there is to lamb is a fine lot of chops, and two legs. But lately we've been hearing about shoulder and breast. Do you roast these, too, since you say every cut of lamb is tender meat?

MISS ALEXANDER:

Yes, lamb shoulder and breast are excellent for roasting.

Have the shoulder boned, first. There are two ways of boning lamb shoulder. One way makes it a roll; the other, a cushion. We prefer the cushion because it holds more stuffing and is so plump and attractive.

Make a well-seasoned bread crumb stuffing, flavored if you like with fresh mint leaves. Stuff the boned shoulder, sew it up, and roast it just as you would leg of lamb, on a rack in an open pan. Add no water to this roast either. Sear in a hot oven at first, then lower the oven to moderate heat to finish.

A shoulder weighing 3 to 4 pounds will need 2-1/2 to 3 hours to roast by this slow method. The meat, though, will be tender and juicy and the stuffing with it certainly makes a savory combination. And for carving, there's nothing so easy as a boned cut.

Breast of lamb makes a dressy little stuffed roast, too, especially if served with stuffed onions around it on the platter.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Thank you, Miss Alexander, for telling us about these new turns in lamb cookery.

The eight-page leaflet, "Lamb as you like it," with pictures and recipes of these roasts and chops is still free for the asking. Just write to the Bureau of Home Economics, Department of Agriculture, Washington. If you don't get an answer within a few days, please don't think your letter is overlooked. We read every one with great care, but it takes some time to get the leaflets mailed out.

